Another
244 fertility medicine consists of the following mixture: 1) bark
789 of the Simarubacea Irvingia barteri Hook. f. (andŏ́k; 2) bark
[824] bark of the Anacardiacea Pseudospondias microcarpa (Rich.) Engl. (ofŏ́s); 3) elephant manure; 4) sand from the Campo or the Uelle; 5) salt. On the eve of sowing this mixture is added to the nuts. This, too, must be understood as a direct transfer of power: the groundnuts are to be as numerous as the fruits of the two plants named; they are to become as enormous as the pile of elephant manure; as numerous as sand in the Campo — we would say, as the sands of the ocean; and as innumerable as the grains
[834] of salt. Finally, certain Liliaceae (ayán) are planted between the groundnuts so that their leaves may become as green as the lilies in the field. As can be seen, there is no lack of friendly encouragement and good examples.

244 The fruit, illustrated in cross-section by Plate 6, Drawings a and b, usually has two seeds, more rarely three, and still more rarely one. Something reminiscent of our love feast occurs when a boy at work finds a fruit with three seeds in his mother's
[195] basket or in the field, calls his friends, and shares the seeds with them. This is called euphemistically: bi kī kăbăd, "we dissect a goat." Thus, we have here the doctrine: Do not forget to do good and to share with your fellow man when you are living in abundance! It is probably more by way of a game that the Pangwe, especially the children, sometimes eat the nuts raw. Otherwise
● [351] raw nuts are prepared principally for soup or compote. It is also customary to boil the whole fruit and then eat the seeds. The
[361] nuts are stored in large, tall baskets of raffia pith, which are hung under the roof or placed on a bed, or the nuts may be placed loose on the groundnut loft, akăn owŭnŏ.

433 As a result of their laziness and indifference, the Pangwe
435 seldom have enough groundnuts, so there is always a period of
244 time when they have to do without them until the next harvest has been brought in and is sufficiently dried. This is the reason that in the Ntum and Fang regions at these times the price for a "plate" (2)

[804] 2. The flat plate-shaped baskets called bush plates are a unit of measurement.

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Fig. 53. Woman from Bébai (Esseng Family) Cracking Ngon in a Cassava Field.

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[462]

sticks. During the planting of groundnuts, on the other hand, "no handsome young man, in fact, no one who by virtue of strength, beauty, and influence is of any account," helps; the only assistance given is provided now and then by a man, ugly or old, who wants to make himself popular with his wife, "so she will not eventually run away and live with somebody else." Once planting is finished, ngon is left to itself and proceeds to climb up the tree trunks and branches. By the middle of May it is already knee high. In June or July the field is weeded once, and later the ngon itself, rising above all else, chokes out the weeds; only some of the larger plants shoot up in spite of it and are occasionally pulled out. In September we already find some of the fruit fully ripened, and at the start of the dry season, in November and December, harvesting can be started. By that time, the leaves and stalks are almost completely dry, and the fruit hangs from the dry stalks in the branches of the trees which served the plant as a prop and are now leafless.

At harvest time an area in the plantation is cleared and carefully covered with leaves. Then the fruit is picked — a job

244 which is completed in three days in the case of medium-sized plantations -- and heaped up in this area around which a fence of oil palm leaves has been constructed. The fruit is beaten with a ● 252 stick to open it (Fig. 53), the contents are left in, and for /96/ protection against field mice and rain, it is covered with cardamom leaves. This job is completed in one day. Then the fruit must lie for four days. After this period the seeds are taken out of the fruit, placed in ordinary baskets lined with banana leaves, and left standing in the house for a day. Then they are washed in a river in order to remove the fruit slime clinging to them which has begun to ferment. This somewhat complicated preparation is concluded by the drying process. To this end the seeds, with loam added, are thoroughly kneaded by hand and then spread out in the village square. The reason for kneading them in loam is not clear. Some say -- and this seems to be the most probable explanation -- that the ngon becomes "stronger" by this process, since of course the dark color of the loam causes the sun to have a stronger effect on the seed. Others, especially Jaunde women, give the explanation that otherwise, that is, if the seeds were not mixed with loam, coma or dizziness comes through the eyes when the seeds are cracked open. I am unable to determine whether this is merely a superstition or is based on correct observation. At any rate, the seeds must dry in the sun on the village square for two days or, when bad weather intervenes, for a correspondingly longer period of time. A traveler walking through the villages after the ngon harvest will find quantities of white seeds covered with loam spread out in front of many houses. Children and women guard the treasure from meddlesome dogs and hens and make indignant threats at any trespasser on their harvest. Especially energetic women bombard the intruding animals with stones, small pieces of wood, or other missiles, until finally the anxious husband emerges from the meeting house and by means of a stick or a fly swatter drives away the disturbers of the peace to a respectful distance, where they come to the realization that there are other and better places and pounce upon the nearest, less carefully guarded pile. In my travels I have always enjoyed this time of year especially, since at these times there was at least some life in the village square which is otherwise so quiet. Furthermore, when a black rain cloud indicates the approach of a tornado, the whole community comes to life.

252 Everybody rushes to gather up the seeds; even hobbling old men and little naked children eagerly take part. Great care is taken, however, to get none of the dust which covers the village square in great quantities, no matter how much sweeping is done. Ordinarily, however, the seeds are gathered very quietly and slowly in the late afternoon, all the more slowly since the loam of which I have already spoken is carefully removed from the seeds. The fear of surprise downpours, incidentally, has produced all kinds of preventive medicines which I shall describe in another place (Section 14). /97/

244 136 Ngon suffer from pests more than the groundnut. Among these are beetles and caterpillars, but above all a species of bug which feeds on the leaves and a number of mammals which feed on the fruit. Among these mammals should be mentioned especially the red-tailed monkey, Cercopithecus buccalis Leconte (osŏ́k), and, wherever it occurs, the baboon, Maimon planirostris Elliot (esí'ge); furthermore, from the family of squirrels there are Sciurus eborivorus Du Chaillu (mvṓk) and Sciurus lemniscatus Leconte (osŏ́n); among the mice, the worst pest is Dendromys messorius Thomas (njaa); and there are also other species, such as Mus pusillulus Ptrs. (okŏ́b). In places elephants and buffaloes, which likewise eat the fruit, create a great deal of destruction. The guib (nkŏ́'k) eats the leaves. Fruit

244 789 rot (ntūí' ngŏ́n, that is "diarrhea of the ngon"), the result of an overabundant rainfall, likewise reduces the harvest, at times to a considerable extent. Against all these enemies there is not much to be done since they do not pay much attention to preventive medicines; nonetheless, Pangwe women believe that they can influence the seeds and the young plants by all kinds of means, as in the case of the groundnut. One such means, ba-aya, has already been described in connection with the groundnut. A second method consists of sprinkling the seeds themselves in the bush plate where they are kept for sowing with red wood that has been ground to a powder (red wood as a symbol of growth, joy, and reproduction). Another pro-

244 789 824 cedure to encourage the growth of the ngon plants and to make them produce an abundance of fruit is called emiĕ ndŏ́b, that is, squirting of (the medicine in the) banana leaf vessel. For this purpose a vessel made of banana leaves is buried in the middle of the farm or set up there, and the following things are put into it.

Sso of the Jaunde, sexual abstinence effectively lasts only three months. The Fang say that the ngon would not grow if the prohibition were broken, and since with them the belly counts for more than love, this prohibition is generally observed.

Only the softer interior of the ngon kernel can be eaten. The kernels must therefore be cracked open, and this is done by means of a little stick from the tree Microdesmis puberula Hook. f., Euphorbiaceae (obīmvǒ́n), with which they lightly strike the seed after placing it on end. Old and young, men and women, participate in this task which is carried out inside and in front of the dwelling house, as well as in the meeting house. It is an activity characterized by a peculiar clicking noise not easily forgotten once one has heard it. In spite of its importance in the household, the ngon is not prepared in a great variety of ways; like the groundnut, it is eaten only in the form of a soup or it is pulverized and boiled in a leaf bundle.

In conclusion, patient reader, kǎ́ndǎ́n (guess a riddle!); kǎ́ndǎ́n (I guess):

akǒ́n afǭ́, e mane nkū́na ngūí,
spear one, he makes ready herd-swine.

Answer:

okǒ́k ofǭ́, e mane dzǎ́d e ngôn
beater one, he makes ready bush plate (with) ngon.

Yams, as a secondary crop with ngon, are of two principal kinds: the three-leaved yams, Dioscorea dumetorum (Kunth) Pax (andéă); and the common yams, Dioscorea minutiflora Engl. (emvū,i). /99/ Each has four species. In addition, the Pangwe differentiate two more kinds which, however, perhaps belong to Dioscorea minutiflora or are close to it: žǫ́ǭ III Ntum, dzǒ (plural, bǐǒ́) Fang; and ebǭ́zǭǭ. In the Jaunde region there is furthermore the Jaunde yam with large tubers, ekǭ́da Jaunde. Finally, the air tuber yam, Dioscorea sativa L. (alǒ́k), is also cultivated, but only in very small quantities. As we said above, the conditions for the growth of the yam resemble those of the ngon; it also climbs up the brush and trees left lying about,

222 tomentella C. Chr., Dryopteris megaphylla (Met.) C. Chr. (mejà
262 m'abǒk), Dryopteris parasitica (L.) O. Ktz. (undǔndu akō), Dryopteris gongylodes (Kuhn) O. Ktz. (engăs), Stenochlaena guineensis (Kuhn) (nkădenā′ III), Alsophila camerunensis Diels (ezĭzŏ′n-ošŭ,e), and Diplazium silvaticum (Borg.) Sw. (esĕ′t).

245 Fruits are cultivated very little. In this category the
262 banana is the only native of any antiquity. The following have been recently introduced: the pineapple (nkōkajă′ń I Fang, ekaṅemvĕ′lĕ Ntum) (1), which is scattered over the entire territory

1. nkōk = sugar, ajăń = Liliaceae, Cyperaceae; ekăń sedge (from the Mwele), because of the leaves which are similar to those of the Cyperaceae.

although planted only in small numbers; the papaya Carica papaya (pō'pō′ Jaunde, adžăbentăṅgan Ntum, Fang) (2), which has scarcely

2. adžăb – Mimusops djave (Lan.) Engl.; e ntăṅgăn = of the Whites.

passed beyond a narrow coastal strip and whose little trees can be counted; small, bitter lemons, Citrus /146/ limonum Risso (olŏs Fang, alŏs Ntum, ngŏambă′ń IV); and oranges that are almost inedible for Europeans.

Coconut palms (mbăń I, njŏ,mō I, Ntum, Fang; myŭ′ndĕ′ IV Jaunde) are to be found only along the coast and even there only in small numbers.

The native "bush plum," Pachylobus edulis E. Don., var. mubafo Engl., Burseracea (asă′ Ntum, ošŭ,ńă Fang), which is found only in or near villages, may be cultivated. The attractive lilac-
[265] blue or beautiful rose-colored fruits are roasted on the fire, and the yellow, quite tasty meat of the fruit is eaten warm.

222 All the other fruits eaten by the Pangwe grow wild. Related
262 to the bush plum in shape and in the taste of its fruit is Pachylobus fraxinifolius Engl. (asĕ,ă; fruit, sēă IV); the fruit is prepared in the

222 262 same manner. The fruit of the Sapotacea Mimusops djave (Lan.) Engl. (adžă'b; fruit, ebǫ̆n), which contains oil, is very important. It resembles a large apple; the jelly in which the two to four seeds are imbedded is very sticky, but quite tasty. The seeds are used in the preparation of oil. Next to these, Irvingia barteri Hook. f., Simarubacea (andǫ̆'k; fruit, ndǫ̆'k IV) is of great importance, Strangely enough, the Pangwe do not value the juice of the fruit's yellow meat, which is extraordinarily fragrant and refreshing, on the condition, to be sure, that the fruit is just at the right state of ripeness. Indeed, in contrast to the coastal tribes, they attach little importance to many forest fruits (for instance, the fruit of the cardamom, of the palm Podococcus barteri, and others) and do not know how to make use of them. The nourishing contents of the [252] kernel of the Irvingia barteri are eaten after being dried or worked into a kind of mush. The Pangwe are incapable of preparing as tasty a sauce from the fruit as that made by the Bassá; the nut bread of the Mpongwe is also unknown to them. Other important edible nuts are Coula edulis Baill., Olacinacea (ewūǭ'mō, Fang; ewūē'me, Ntum; fruit, kō'mō or kūę̄'me); Panda oleosa Pierre (afă'ne[k] ;fruit, făne[k] and a variety unknown to me (andǭ' ; fruit, ndǭ' IV). Very tasty and refreshing fruit is supplied by the following trees: Burseracea Pachylobus macrophyllus (Oliv.) (andötǫ́'m Ntum, atǫ̆'m Fang; fruit, ndötǫ́'m IV Ntum, tǫ́'m IV Fang); Anacardiaceae Trichoscypha spec. (amyūt, fruit myūt IV; and engǫ̆ń, fruit ngǫ̆ń); the pulp of various Landolphia varieties, namely, Landolphia ochracea K. Sch. (ayŭ'm), Landolphia piriformis Stapf (dzĕ III), and two other varieties (efōfǫ́'do Fang and kǫ́'mo III), in which the seeds are imbedded, is somewhat sour but quite refreshing. All the remaining fruits -- insofar as I have tasted them -- have scarcely any special charm for the European; indeed some, like Laccodiscus and Pseudospondias, have a downright horrible taste and are -- as they say in West Africa -- "good for blackmen, no good for whitemen." Their names are: Parinarium tessmannii Engl., Rosaceae (efō't); Chrysophyllum tessmannii Engl., Sapotaceae (mbă'm I); Pachylobus tessmannii Engl., Burseraceae (nga-angǫ̆lǫ̆ngǫ̆'); Laccodiscus spinulosus dentatus Radlk., Sapindaceae (atū'lŭń); Pseudospondias microcarpa

262 In addition to the spices, the Pangwe use oil as an additive for their food. The oil is obtained from the oil palm Elaeis guineensis L. (alĕn) and the Mimusops djave (Lan.) Engl. (adźăb), but it is extracted so rarely that its use in the kitchen is far secondary to its use for the care of the skin. For this reason I shall discuss the extraction of oil when I come to speak of skin care.

354 The kitchen of the Pangwe woman is located, as we have already seen, in the house under the suspension loft. There is no actual hearth in it; among the Mwai this is represented by three rocks, but for the rest the pot which is always without legs is placed on a potsherd or on the skillfully arranged logs of the fire. If at any time there is more than usual to be cooked, for instance, after a successful elephant hunt, the daily fireplace is too small, and a second one is built behind the house.

313 For cooking -- as every little Pangwe girl knows -- three things are necessary: wood, water, and fire. There is never any shortage of wood; every day the housewife brings the necessary logs from the plantation (Fig. 51). Water is likewise available in great quantities; it merely has to be taken from the river in calabashes (ndŏk IV) or -- among the Ntum and Okak -- in earthenware water flasks (Fig. 92a), Pangwe esŭ,gă (hence the name šū,k, an imitation of the gurgling sound made by the water as it is poured in; hence also a-šōk "waterfall"). We discussed the fire in the previous section.

312 415

412 252 The kitchen utensils of the woman are very simple. The grindstone (akŏk) and the little round rubbing stone (ngŏk IV) that goes with it are found everywhere. The grindstone is irregularly flat, scoured smooth by the rubbing done on it, and it usually lies on the ground on which the woman kneels in front of the stone she works. Among the Mwai, who are somewhat more advanced in the art of cooking anyway, the stone is placed on four small posts like a table, a fact which considerably "raises" it in appearance. Groundnuts, ngon, and so forth are rubbed to a powder by rolling the rubbing stone back and forth on the grindstone. The same purpose is served by an almost round wooden plate which has the shape of a stemmed leaf with raised edges (evĭn-ndŏk, efeĭ-ndŏk); it is used for the kernels of the Irvingia barteri Hook. f. (andŏ́k; fruit, ndŏ́k IV), Figure 93; the grinder used with this plate is a hard fruit (aśók), round as a ball.

415 The Pangwe woman very tidily removes the remains of the
252 pulverized nuts or kernels from the grindstone by means of half the shoulder blade bone of some animal, such as a monkey (Fig. 94 a), a piece of raffia stalk, or a tree mushroom (Fig. 94b). Only rarely does she do this by hand.

412 For pounding cassava leaves and other vegetables, as well as
252 for removing the meat from the fruit of the oil palm, a pestle is used in a wooden trough. The pestle (ntú'm e mbǫ̀k) has a knobby enlargement either at both ends or at only one end /150/, and the trough (mbǫ̀k I) usually has the shape of a canoe with one or, more rarely, two handles (Fig. 95). In the Mwai and southern Fang region one can find larger wooden troughs of a quadrangular shape and small wooden troughs with or without /Fig. 92 a appears here in the original text/ handles (Fig. 96), endŏn.

Plantains are peeled with a plantain peeler (mbŏb I), Figure 97, with which the skin is chipped into pieces and scraped off. The peeler consists of a narrow piece of raffia leafstalk, and it is often attractively decorated with carved patterns.

415 The shallow basketwork plate (dzžd; plural, bižd) -- see Section 8 -- which we have already discussed among the agricultural and fishing tools, also plays an important role in the house and kitchen, where it serves simultaneously as bowl, dish, plate, and so forth. The women have a large selection of the bigger plates (dzžad) and smaller plates (ɔvǫ̌k) of this kind on hand. Sometimes one also sees wooden plates or, more accurately, wooden bowls of the same shape as the basket plates (1).

824 1. Made from the wood of the Alstonia congensis Engl. (ekūk), Apocynacea, or of the Ceiba pentandra (L.) Gärtn. (dum).

The kitchen spoon or stirring spoon (mbŏb I, ebŏm), which must be strictly differentiated from the eating spoon, /Figs. 93 and 94 appear here in the original text/ is carved out of wood (Fig. 98) and is used for stirring food, mixing vegetables, and dividing the mush.

415 The eating or serving spoons, with which the woman tastes the food during cooking and ladles it out of the pot at mealtime, are kept above the fireplace. /151/ /Fig. 95 appears here in the original text./ Such spoons have various shapes; the simplest is a Sarcophrynium leaf folded in the form of a spoon and used only once. This leaf spoon is called ntɔ́ɔ̀o I. The calabash spoon (egbwǎ́s) represents a higher stage of spoon, as does the snail spoon (ebɔ́ɔ̀na, ekɔ̄kɔ̌́e), Figure 101. The calabash spoon is made from a small fruit of the calabash gourd (Fig. 99 and 100) which has been cut in half through the middle; the snail spoon is made from the [321] large Achatina marginata Sw. (kɔ̄ɔ̃́) by cutting out a piece of its shell. These are the women's spoons for everyday use, and as such they correspond to the men's wooden eating spoon (tɔ̄k). Women never use ladling spoons made of wood.

The most important kitchen utensil is the cooking pot (myɛ̌́ I, yiɔ̌k; plural, lɔ̄k) made of clay (viɔ̌k), of which each woman keeps a number of larger ones (myɛ̌́, viɔ̌k) and smaller ones (obɛ́bɛ̄́) on the pot loft (akáń e myɛ̌́). Through the trading companies, iron pots [177] with three feet (mɛ̄kɔ́ne III) have already spread throughout the land. /Fig. 96 appears here in the original text./

262 After these general preliminary /152/ observations, I shall go on to a description of the methods of preparing /Fig. 97 appears here in the original text/ the principal food plants. Those of greatest importance as staple foods will once more be listed here in order: cassava, plantain, groundnut, ngon, maize, taro, yams (1) (Fang region).

1. Smaller repetitions cannot be entirely avoided for the sake of clarity in the individual sections. The reader will be so kind as to excuse them.

1. Cassava

•252 Aside from insignificant variations, the cassava root is prepared in five different ways. Two of these are chiefly women's food: pulverized cassava, cooked in a leaf roll bent into the shape of a stirrup

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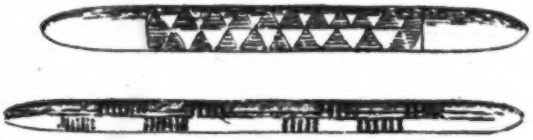

Fig. 97. Plantain Peelers.

252 (nkʉ́ŋa-mbʉ̌n), and steamed cassava (amǎ́ŋǎ-mbʉ̌n), neither of them very tasty or very carefully prepared. The three remaining ways of preparing cassava are in the main designed for men, namely: cassava rolls, the so-called "kanks" (2) (ebɔ̀bɔ̌), the

2. The origin of this word is not clear to me; I do not know whether it was taken from Negro languages or whether it is a European word corrupted in coastal English.

exclusive food on journeys because of their handy shape; cassava cutlets (osā-mbʉ̌n); and finally, boiled cassava roots (ȁgbwǎ ma-mbʉ̌n). In the entire region there is uniformity in the matter of cassava dishes, with the sole exception that the stirrup-shaped leaf rolls are also now and then eaten by men among the Ntum and Fang.

Because of its strong smell, cassava -- which could perhaps replace our potato -- has no great appeal to European taste, especially in the forms in which the Negroes prepare it. The sausage-shaped cassava rolls in the north, where the roots are first placed in clean, running water, most readily please our palates, in spite of their pasty odor. To make them tasty, one has to cut them into slices in the European fashion or pulverize them, mix with an egg, and fry them in butter. The kanks in the south are very bad, because there the roots are placed in the swamp for a while prior to preparation and hence take on a quite repulsive muddy odor.

252 (a) Cassava rolls or cassava loaves (mbǒ́m I-mbǒ́m, ebōbǒ́).

These require more time to prepare, from four to five days. The roots are placed in water holes just as they come from the plantation, that is, with the rind and without being cut into pieces (with the exception of very large roots which are cut in two). /Fig. 98 appears here in the original text./ /154/ /Figs. 99, 100, and 101 appear here in the original text./ This is done in order to draw the poison out of them. Ntum and Fang women attach no importance to the kind of water in which they place the roots; indeed, they seem to prefer swampy areas, such as raffia swamps. In those places one often sees the remains of the cassava on the thoroughly muddy water and along the edge of the puddle; over
[136] the remains an enormous number of butterflies floats like a cloud, especially blue and white Pieridae, varieties of Papilio, among them the large blue Zalmoxis. These holes, which have a strong odor of both mud and cassava, are valuable places of discovery for the collector. In the northern region, on the other hand, among the Jaunde, Bene, and many Bulu, cassava is not placed in the swamp but on the sandy bottom of clear, flowing streams, near the bank where the water flows more slowly. Also they take the trouble to block off a stream so that only a little water can run through. Then the roots are placed on the bottom downstream from the dam. Perhaps the reason for placing the cassava roots in clear, running
[133] water in the northern region is that there are few raffia swamps in that area. The cassava has to lie in the still or very gently flowing water for a period of from three to four days, three days in the case of younger roots and four days in the case of older, strong roots. After this period the woman takes the roots out and by hand pulls off the bark together with the firmer fibrous layer underneath. This job presents no difficulties. Then she lightly washes the roots on the spot and pulls out the center rib. With both hands she presses the cassava into a ball in the water -- during this process it exudes a whitish sap -- and places the balls in a basket lined with leaves.
252 Further preparation is done in the house; there the cassava is pul-
834 verized on the grindstone, and the powder is poured on leaves which the woman picked on her return from the swamp. In the south these

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Fig. 99. Calabash Spoon.

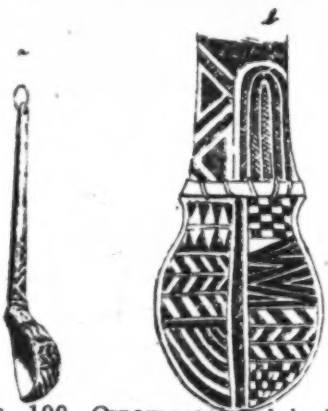

Fig. 100. Ornamental Calabash Spoons.

[521]

Fig. 101. Snail Spoon.

are the leaves of the previously often mentioned Marantacea Sarcophrynium velutinum (Baks) K. Sch. (okiǎ̌ǐkūī, okiǎ̌ǐ) (1), Plate 11, with the

1. okiǎ̌ǐ = leaf; a kūī = to envelop; stem kū. Compare kū[1], the turtle, because of its armor, and a kū-t = to knock, to open by knocking, that is, to cause something to uncover itself.

species glabrius Laes. /155/ (andū́ma); in the north (Jaunde), the leaves of the Clinogyne schweinfurthiana K. Sch. (embūŏ) are used. Every day the women bring large bundles of such leaves from the field since they use them not only for wrapping cassava and maize loaves, but also as trays and plates.

252 The mass of cassava is gently kneaded in these leaves into the shape of a sausage; then a leaf is wrapped around it and folded over at the ends like a parcel; finally, there is tied around it a string made from the stalks of the same plant which supplied the leaf cover (the stalks of the plant are called ndə́n IV, ndə́nan IV). These rolls are boiled with some water for an hour in a covered pot, and they are then put to one side to cool off. Only in rare cases are they eaten warm immediately after being cooked (Fig. 102). They keep for three days this way. Usually they are 35 centimeters long, somewhat longer in the Jaunde region, and five centimeters thick; they are in all somewhat larger in the Bulu region.

252 435 484 Throughout the region such a "kank" is equal in value to a tobacco leaf (commercial tobacco) or a spoonful of salt. This is equal to a piece of spear money or seven pfennigs. They are generally used as provisions for bearers and employees of the Whites because of their convenience and availability, their unlimited supply, and their popularity with the natives.

Dried cassava rolls (engū́nă-mbǫ́m).

252 484 251 As was mentioned before, the ordinary rolls do not keep longer than three days. Hence a special procedure is used in their preparation for longer journeys or for situations when one cannot or does not want to make the rolls again and again. In this procedure, the cassava balls are placed on the drying loft for a month after they have been washed; only then are they processed, that is, pulverized on stones, wrapped in leaves, and boiled. Sometimes the balls themselves are carried along on the journey. They are softened in water when they are wanted, boiled, and consumed cold. Both kinds of cassava rolls are called engù́nă-mbǔ́n.

(b) Cassava cutlets (osā -mbǔ́n, ngŏ-mbǔ́n IV).

252 A very bitter and at the same time poisonous species of cassava is made into cassava cutlets. For this purpose, the pieces of root are peeled with a cutlass, halved lengthwise or quartered, and boiled with one and a half liters of water for an hour in a pot lined with plantain leaves. Then the roots are taken out, cut like a loaf into slices, and hung for a day in running water inside a basket lined with leaves. After that, they are thoroughly washed on the net described under "Fishing" on page 80, and they are then eaten cold. /156/

Dried cassava cutlets (dżǎ[s] -mbǔ́n).

[251 484] These are dried after the boiling and before being hung in the water, in the same way as engū́na-mbǔ́n. They are used in the same situations.

[i.e. cassava roll. -- Analyst]

252

(c) Boiled cassava roots (agbwă ma-mbŭn).

A species of our plant, one which has comparatively little poison and which for that reason does not require a long period of leaching in water, is cut to size like the above and boiled for an hour. Its very insipid and fibrous root is eaten hot.

(d) Ground cassava boiled in a leaf bent into a stirrup shape (nkŭ'nă-mbŭn I).

A strip of bark is split off from the root with the cutlass, and the interior is scraped out with a rough piece of stalk taken from [124] the trunk of the rattan palms Ancistrophyllum acutiflorum Becc.

Fig. 102. Cassava Roll.

(nkăne) or Calamus deerratus M. et W. (edžĭn). The slivers fall onto a leaf placed underneath and are then ground on the grindstone. The pulp is then thoroughly kneaded with a stirring spoon

Fig. 103. Leaf Bent into the Shape of a Stirrup.

in a basketwork plate or wooden plate lined with a leaf. Water, which first runs over a charred piece of plantain bark in a leaf funnel, is added to it as it is kneaded. In this way, the water and thus also the cassava pulp acquire a blackish tinge, supposedly because the women do not like the white color of the cassava. The pulp /Figs. 102 and 103 appear here in the original text/ is then placed inside a rolled leaf bent into the shape of a stirrup (Fig. 103); like the cassava rolls it is set on the fire with very little water and boiled for an hour.

This dish is glutinously tough and blackish; it has an ugly appearance and a rather unpleasant taste.

(e) Steamed cassava (amǎ'hǎ-mbǔ́n).

252

Ground pulp, such as is used for cassava rolls, or boiled roots are placed between two leaves which have been tied above a pot. Macabo leaves are boiled in the pot itself, and the cassava is steamed at the same time (for an hour).

In addition to the roots, the leaves of the cassava plant (mandžə̄ə̄, plural) are frequently eaten, mainly by women. The leaves are pounded thoroughly in a wooden trough (Fig. 104), placed with some water in an open pot /157/ on the fire, and left to boil for not less than three and a half hours, more water being added during the boiling. Then they are stirred while salt or pepper is added, and they are served. In this form the vegetable is called mbǎb I. Although it does not taste bad, it is nonetheless regarded as inferior food and is eaten by the men only when nothing else is available.

2. Plantain

The plantain is eaten in five different forms; for three of these forms, unripe fruit is used, and for the remaining two, ripe fruit.

(a) Plantains roasted in ashes (ngpó-ekə̄'n I).

An unripe, peeled plantain is wrapped in a leaf and placed next to the fire in ashes which are lightly piled on top of it. After half an hour it is ready. On the outside the plantain is a whitish yellow; inside, a dark yellow. It has a rather dry taste.

(b) Boiled plantains (mbe,ə̄ ekə̄'n I).

The unripe plantains are peeled, the ribs and small particles of skin are cleaned off, and the plantains are then boiled in water for 20 minutes.

(c) Pounded plantains (ntšímǎ ekə̄'n I).

These are prepared like the previous ones, but they are eaten after being pounded to a mash.

252 (d) Boiled ripe plantains (mfō,k-ekō'n I, mfō-nsā I).

The skins of ripe plantains are removed with the plantain peeler and placed in a pot. On top of these is placed the fruit, whole or cut into pieces; on top of the fruit in turn are placed more skins. Then water is added to cover everything and boiled for half an hour. The plantains are eaten either whole or ground to a mash with cold water.

(e) Raw ripe plantains (nsā III).

The ripe fruit is eaten raw or roasted in ashes.

3. Groundnut

Sometimes the groundnut is eaten roasted whole (kōk IV-ewu,no, etōle-ewu,no). Otherwise it is prepared in four different ways, in part as mush. In all these forms of preparation it is first necessary to break open the groundnuts by hand (Plate 12), a task in which the entire family takes part; then the woman lightly roasts the nuts for a few minutes over the fire on the groundnut roasting board and grinds them twice on the grindstone. After the second grinding the mass is called eb[s] -ewu,no (bă, "to divide," hence e-bă -b "that which has separated off," for instance, /158/ /Fig. 104 appears here in the original text/ small pieces of bark that stand out from the tree, and e-bă,-s, "the scale"), because the ground material tends to stick together and falls like scales from the stone. The following dishes are prepared from this base.

(a) Groundnut sauce (esă,ngăne).

Water is heated in a pot, and the hot water, except for a small amount, is poured off into a little shell. Then the pot is taken off the fire, and the groundnut substance is poured into it. The whole is thoroughly stirred with a kitchen spoon while hot water is added

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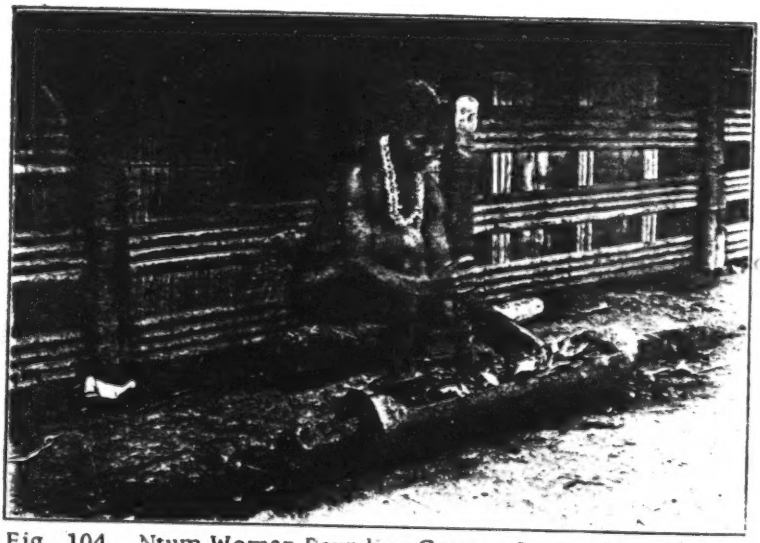

Fig. 104. Ntum Woman Pounding Cassava Leaves in a Trough for Spinach.

252 three or four times, and salt is added. Everything is given another good stirring, and the dish is ready. Sometimes the material is also boiled with a little water in the pot itself.

(b) Groundnut bundle (nnǰm-ewu˛no I).

As in the case of (a), water is put on the fire in a pot. After the pot has been taken off the fire, the groundnut material is poured into it and stirred up as water is added. Then the mush is put inside a plantain leaf that has been drawn through the fire to make it flexible; the leaf is tied together into a bundle and placed on the fire in a pot of cold water. The pot must be closed at the top with leaves. If the groundnuts are not stirred up with hot water, but, as in this case, are placed on the fire cold, they always have to boil from half an hour to an hour. /159/

(c) Groundnut mush (atõ˛õ).

The mass of groundnuts -- prepared as indicated above -- is poured into a pot of boiling water and stirred around. Then it is

●252 placed on the fire for a brief period -- two minutes -- and salt is added to it.

(d) Groundnut soup (mpfiǎ́ǹ I-ewu no).

This differs from the foregoing only by the addition of a larger amount of water so that it becomes a soup. It is served as a gravy for meat, etc., and is never eaten by itself.

4. Ngon

Ngon is prepared in only two forms, as a bundle (nnǎ́m ngə̂n) and as a soup (nšǎ́-ngə̂n I). These two forms correspond to those described in connection with the groundnut.

5. Maize

Maize is eaten in four different forms. Either the entire ear is roasted (nkpɔ̌-fun I), or it is consumed as maize soup (nšǎ́-fun I), as maize mush (ngbwɛ̌́t), and as maize bread (bǔ́mɔ̄ III).

(a) The entire ear.

Like plantains, fresh ears are roasted in ashes.

(b) Maize soup (nšǎ́-fun I).

The kernels are broken out of the spindles of old ears and boiled until they are soft (half an hour) in a pot half full of water. Then they are ground up and boiled for an hour with minced leaves of the cassava and the Amaranthus (endɔ̌ǹ-abɔ̄́k). When they are done, cold water is added, the whole mixture is stirred, and the soup is served.

(c) Maize bread (bǔ́mɔ̄ III).

The kernels are removed from old ears of maize and poured into a pot of water so they will swell slightly. Then the woman spoons them out a few at a time, places them on the grindstone, and,

252 frequently pouring on water, grinds them to flour (half a basket of ears produces a heaping basketwork plate of flour from which three loaves are made). The flour in a basketwork plate lined with leaves is stirred with water to form a batter; salt, pepper, and frequently [262] also shrimp and dragonfly larvae are added. This batter, as in the case of the women's cassava nkŭ́na mbún, is placed in a Sarcophrynium leaf folded in the shape of a stirrup, and it is boiled for an hour in a pot with a little water. The end result is a dish which, while it is rather heavy, tastes quite good. /160/

(d) Maize mush (ngbwɛ̌́r).

Maize mush is made of fresh maize flour which, when boiled, makes a white pulpy soup. Since I have not closely observed its preparation, I am unable to give any details.

The remaining plants, such as taro, macabo, yams, and so forth, are not sufficiently important to be discussed in relation to the various ways of preparing them. The reader will, I think, from the information given so far, derive a clear enough picture of the multiple uses made by the Pangwe of their vegetable foodstuffs.

Meat is boiled in pots by itself -- just like fish, which, as among us, are dressed and scaled -- or it is boiled in a leaf bundle with groundnuts and ngon. As for other ways of preparation, the [267] Pangwe are familiar with roasting, but they use this method only in order to make the food keep and to preserve it.

264 Meals are quite irregular and poorly distributed:

"kikitase afök anū́, hamoš́ ebań e nkǒ́k,
[539] In the morning a little bit for the mouth, (mid) day a loan for the jaw,

alu bepfŭ́m"
at night, quite full.

In the morning, soon after getting up, they usually eat a small amount of a cold cassava dish or something similar, which the women have cooked the night before since they usually have to go to the plantations early. In the course of the forenoon they content themselves with a little snack of cassava bread, bananas, and the like.

249 303 the board is tied to the /192/ lower cross-stick. Sometimes in place of the board one sees sticks oriented in the same direction and placed close to each other, which are then, of course, tied to the frame at the top and at the bottom.

The pressing itself (a kī̌le mažǔ̌ī́) is shown in Figure 144. The little basket with the pulp is hung either over the stick that is set at an angle or over the upper end of the board (Fig. 144), so that it rests in front of the board. Then it is squeezed out with sticks. In squeezing, one stick after another is placed diagonally over the basket (in a top to bottom direction); one end of the stick is placed behind the corresponding frame post while the other end is drawn up to the other post and fastened to it with string. In this way the basket is squeezed, and the contents are pressed downwards.

Prior to this, a vessel has been placed under the board down which the oil runs during the pressing. A leaf filter or an old basket over the vessel strains out the larger impurities. During the rainy season the fruit yields a more watery oil, while during the dry season it yields an oil that becomes solid very soon after being pressed out.

(b) Oil palm oil.

249 252 Corresponding to the more infrequent occurrence of the oil palm from north to south, oil from the oil palm is of much greater importance in the north than in the south. In the former region it is better prepared -- if at this point I may speak of it as a food -- even if it is not prepared as well as among the coastal tribes -- while in the latter region it is less well prepared. Furthermore, while in the south there are only three methods of obtaining the oil, in the north there are four and an equal number of varieties of oil corresponding to the methods of extraction. These are as follows: /193/ /Fig. 145 appears here in the original text/

1. Pressed palm oil (mowǔ̌, plural), for rubbing on the skin and food;
2. Boiled palm oil (nnyǎ̌man e mbǒ̌n), only for rubbing on the skin;
3. Washed palm oil (žǒ̌h), Jaunde and Mwele, used for rubbing on the skin and for food;

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4. Palm seed oil (mbɔ̄n e mbaṅ, maniaṅga Jaunde), used only for the skin.

In the order given, from 1) to 4), the frequency of production decreases. In other words, pressed oil is made most frequently, palm seed oil is made most rarely. The order is the same for the southern Pangwe, except that washed oil is completely absent.

1) Pressed oil.

The stalks bearing the ripe fruit are taken off the tree, cut apart by means of axe and cutlass, and left to lie for a couple of days under a blanket of banana leaves. Then the fruit itself is taken off and boiled with a little water for about half an hour in a pot covered with leaves. Afterwards, it is pounded in a trough with a wooden pestle, and the seeds are picked out (Fig. 145). The pulp is then pressed out on the oil press. The oil has the familiar yellowish-red color, and among Europeans it appears on the dinner table as "palm oil chop" with meat and the tubers of macabo or taro; however, only a small proportion of the natives eat it (one-quarter, in the south even less).

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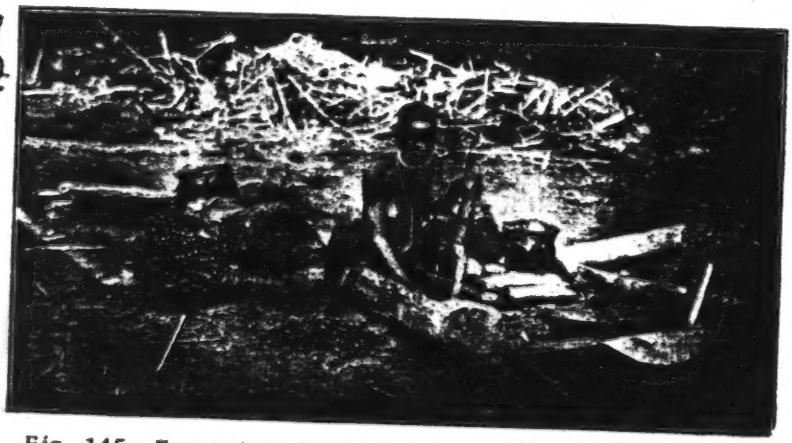

Fig. 145. Extraction of Oil from the Fruit of the Oil Palm.

2) Boiled oil.

249 The pressed oil is boiled until it becomes quite clear, a
● 252 stage which can best be recognized by letting a few drops of oil
824 fall onto a piece of raffia pith. During the boiling, a number of leaves of the feverweed Andropogon schoenanthus (ɔ́sim e ntangan), which has a peculiar smell, tied in a bundle and dipped into the pot for about a minute. When the oil has boiled long enough, the pot is taken from the fire, leaves and pieces of bark of the bush plum Pachylobus edulis E. Don. (asá' Ntum, ɔsʊ́'nga Fang) are put in it for about three minutes -- supposedly because they have a pleasant smell -- and then the translucent, dirty-white oil is poured off.

3) Washed oil.

249 The oil is first treated like the pressed oil. After the pound-
253 ing, water is poured into the trough, and the meat of the fruit is thoroughly kneaded, the kernels being removed at the same time. The water is then carefully poured off. This process of kneading the meat in the water is repeated two more times; then the meat is removed, and the oil floating on the water in the trough is ladled off. The oil has the same characteristics as the pressed oil; it is also yellowish-red and is used in the same manner. This oil may likewise be boiled, and when this is done, it is identical with the boiled pressed oil. /194/

4) Palm seed oil.

The palm nuts are broken open on a stone (Fig. 146), and the seeds are heated over a fire in a pot without water. Then the seeds are set on fire, which forces out the oil that they contain. The seeds with the oil are then poured onto a potsherd with two holes in it, and the oil drips into a vessel placed underneath. Palm seed oil is quite dark and opaque.

302 Finally, we might mention that children -- adults only if there happens to be no oil available -- sometimes simply place the palm fruit between the logs of the fire and then rub the warm fruit back and forth in their hands. The oil which is forced out in this way is then immediately rubbed onto the skin.

1: Tessmann--198 E-5 (1904-1909) 1913 FH9 Fang FH9

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Aside from rubbing his skin with oil, the Pangwe likes to smear his body with dyes on certain occasions. For this purpose he uses red chiefly, more rarely white, and only exceptionally black. There are no other colors. Red is the color for joy,

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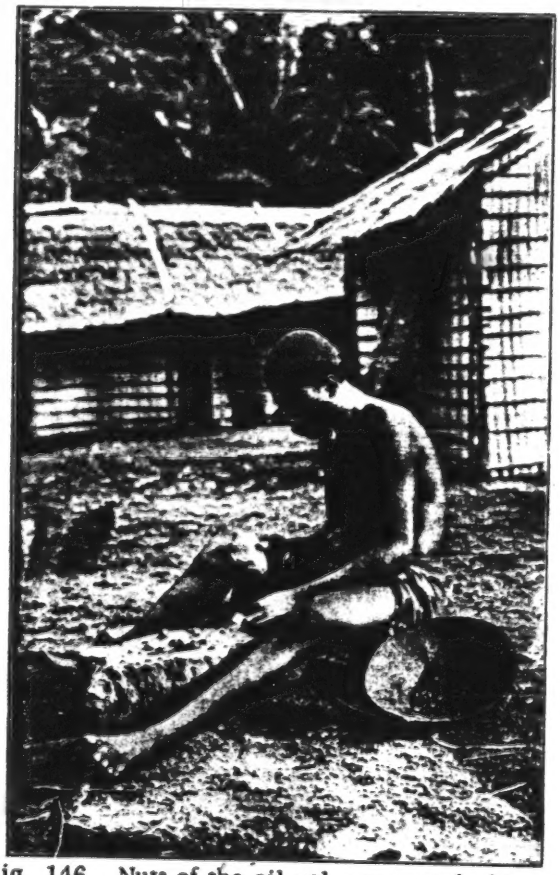

Fig. 146. Nuts of the oil palm are cracked open to extract the oil.

and white is the color for death and evil. From this, the occasions on which the colors are used will be apparent. On festive occasions, that is, dances, weddings, and birth celebrations, red is used, a color which sometimes (for instance, in the love dance) is enlivened by white suns and circles, which seldom

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

X.—*Food. Cooking.*

Food used by the Fang is precisely similar to that of all other tribes inhabiting the great zone of palms and bananas as described by Humboldt. Added to these ordinary foods of the Fang is their liking for human flesh, indulged in to this day in spite of the law, which is often powerless to reach and punish the offenders. Cassava, *mbóe*, plantains, *bikon*, crushed gourd seeds, *ngongon*, corn; *mekobe*, a most nutritive tuber, sweet potatoes, yams, palm oil, bananas, snails and various mollusca. Fish is wrapped in plantain leaves and boiled, or set on hot ashes and fire piled on top of the *bundle* of food. All kinds of meat is eaten, from deer down to the smallest bush rat; snakes are considered very good meat. No portion is wasted, every morsel of skin and intestines are eaten. Goats and chickens are raised for food and trade. Corn or other cereals are not used for the purpose of making bread. Milk is not used. Preparations of milk such as butter and cheese are not made. There is a marked preference for meats. When an animal is slaughtered, women bring wooden bowls to collect the blood in. The blood is often cooked mixed with palm oil. A Fang will eat almost any kind of known food and at any time, providing it is not his *Eki* or taboo, given him during infancy, prohibiting the eating of a certain kind of food, unless partaken of under certain conditions. Except for the *Eki* men, women and children partake of the same food. The Fang are improvident. When on long journeys they often chew a piece of Kola nut, but more commonly chew pieces of a certain root; it has several different names. Palm oil is extensively used in cooking. Salt (*nku*) is much enjoyed and sought after in trade. Sugar is only used in the form of sugar cane and eaten uncooked. The chiefs, or rather headmen, have no special form of food. Eating earth is not indulged in. So far as I am aware, all fish, flesh and fowl is cooked before being eaten. Flesh is often extremely high, at times positively bad, before it is eaten, but not one morsel is ever wasted.

Fish, fowl, bush rats, snakes and all kinds of meats are smoked or sun-dried; food prepared thus is carried on journeys in the bush wrapped in leaves and eaten with *mboa* (cassava) without any further preparation. Permanent ovens for baking are not in use. Meat is roasted on small spits over the log fire or wrapped up in leaves and hot ashes banked around and on top of it. Native vegetables are frequently cooked with meats, plantains are usually boiled separately or roasted close to the fire. Most cooking utensils used by the Fang near the coast are iron or brass pots, imported by white traders; but farther inland the native pots are much more in vogue. These native pots are made of grey clay and sun-dried; they become harder and stronger by use, and vary in size and capacity from a pint to about three gallons.

Cooking vessels are not kept very clean, being simply rinsed out with a little water; but if the vessel is a brass trade pot or kettle, it is usually taken to the river or a near stream, and scoured bright; but I fear the chief reason for doing

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

this is, because, to a Fang eye, polished brass looks *mbung* (handsome) and is attractive for trade. Vessels are usually placed on top of the fire and not suspended over it; vegetables are frequently placed in stews. No separate dwelling house exists for cooking, it is carried on in the dwelling house. The water used to wash a dirty pot with is often thrown out on the earth floor of the dwelling, children playing in the wet dirt. In all domestic matters the Fang are very filthy. I have on more than one occasion when inside a native hut seen children micturate and defecate on the earth floor close to where the mother was cooking, the women and men present taking very little notice, and only occasionally placing the child outside the door. Cooking is exclusively the duty of women, a *real man* will not cook. Food is often highly seasoned with hot native red and green peppers, and food thus prepared is much appreciated. The food is usually well cooked through, with the exception of plantains which are often only half boiled and served quite hard. Large round stones are used for rubbing and reducing to powder gourd seeds and various tubers. Smoking and salting are the only methods practised for preserving food, and on account of the value of salt and the difficulty of transporting it inland, it is seldom thus employed.

Drinks.—Rum has been carried from the coast by white traders and natives far inland and is used whenever obtainable, but the chief drink is cold water. Palm wine is made called *meyak*. Except in places where a trade factory existed I have seen very few cases of intoxication among the Fang, but when they can obtain rum it seems to completely demoralize them. Tea and coffee are known to people living near white settlers. When a party of headmen and others have taken a meal at the mission house, tea and coffee were greatly enjoyed and cups frequently re-filled. The first meal is usually about eight or nine o'clock; the natives think the white man eats very early; a mid-day meal is served and the evening repast is usually about sunset.

Food is frequently brought to the men inside the *abeng* (palaver house); at other times an entire family eats together inside the dwelling house. No ceremonies whatever precede the commencement of meals. When a son is born, or on the occasion of a wedding, and after some large palaver has been settled, a feast is usually given. Invited guests and strangers partake together with the town folk of the food prepared; it is usually served on the earth floor of the palaver house, on plantain leaves, and in cooking pots, each person helping himself. The women do not eat with the men inside the palaver house.

Mode of preparing Mboa.

Ba du mbóa osui, e vóm a ne ndátál: a kaga boma mēlu mēla, be keli tás: be sáli ne nye: be náû mbūk: be kēzi nye mbāk iti be nou ntum: beña tyak: bènga vul: be kaga mana vul: be kēzi nye ē mvē: vckoba ji: ve telē mvè mboa: wena mboa abea.

8: Bennett D-5 (ca. 1898) 1899 FH9 Fang FH9

Translation.

They put cassava to soak in the river, in a place where there is (plenty of) mud. When it has lain there three days, they go and rub off the rind. They bring it (to the house). They take a trough, and put the cassava in it. They take the mashing stick. They mash the cassava. They wrap it up (in leaves). When they have finished that, they put it in the pot. Then they light the fire. They put the pot of iguma (on the fire). Then the iguma is *boiled.*

Azo Mfini: (Plantation).

Betata basa leua bo dia inifini (our fathers did not make plantain villages), *n'afan eto bè* (because their land was near at hand, *i.e.*, near the regular village). *Fañ b'anyege infini ne bo bidji binne* (Fañ likes plantain village to make good food, *i.e.*, because thus they get good food). *Bikon e djel ine, betok* (Plantains in town have (one) small). *Infini O ne djal moe afan bibè* (Plantain village is a good town (because) land (*i.e.*, good land) near). *Nson ane afan betata benga to bibè* (Like the land where the fathers were near). *B'angéye infini, ne dzi bidji binné. Mo'mbok a gouevi bstyit: bevok benga sóm* (They like the plantain village (because) there they eat good food. One person kills game (meat) others buy). *Menda infini me vic bo abé* (Houses of plantain villages soon spoil).[1] *Fañ, Ba'dji asas mbóa kidiase* (Fañ they eat a meal of cassava in the morning).

Regarding the *Eki* tabooing certain foods or performance of certain actions as in vogue among the Fang, I learned from a friend and *confrère*, Rev. R. H. Nassau, D.D., M.D., of Gaboon, that the *Eki* of the Fang is precisely similar to the *Orunda* of the Mpôngwe. Dr. Nassau is a veteran missionary of thirty-seven years' African experience, and he is always ready to help others who are sufficiently interested in the natives to inquire about them. I know of no one on the West Coast more willing or eminently able than he for imparting information regarding the people among whom he has laboured.

XI.—*Anthropophagy.*

Cannibalism prevails among the Fang beyond question, and only fear of the law keeps him somewhat in check. I am able to speak of the Fang as anthropophagi; not alone from information gathered, but from having once had the opportunity of visiting a town two days after a victim had been killed and eaten.

This town, named Olunda, is on the right bank of the Nkomo river, about 60 miles from the seat of government in the Congo Français. Whilst visiting the town Nenge-nenge (the island of islands) in the autumn of 1898, a native trader named Arkendengi, employed by a British trading house at Gaboon, informed me

[1] It is very true that houses having plantains growing near, soon rot; this is due to the dampness caused by loss of sunlight and heat